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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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WHAT IS SALVATION?

I will read in the first chapter of Ephesians, from the fifteenth verse to the end:

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

This is Paul's recapitulation of the topics of his prayer for the disciples of Christ. I have selected it because it is eminent in two respects—as giving an exalted view of the work of the divine Spirit in the human soul in this world, and as giving a large and sublime intimation of what religion means in the heart of man. I have selected it, also, as giving, in pre-eminent words which are dim, I might say, with undisclosed glory, a conception of the power of the Lord Jesus Christ to effect in men that character which is so exalted, so rich, so noble, in this transporting vision of the apostle. The two grand ideas unfolded here are the recapitulation, as a statement from the apostle, of what he had been accustomed to do for the followers of Christ since he heard that they had come into discipleship; and of the destiny of man as revealed in Christ Jesus, Christ himself being the supreme influence and power by which that destiny was to be accomplished. Great as the work is, impossible as it seems to nature, and absolutely impossible as it is to unaided human power, being a vision of poetry—almost a rhapsody of transcendental prophecy—yet, when it is coupled with the majesty and might of Christ as representing the fullness of God's loving power, it becomes not only possible, but certain, and is the theme of unbounded joy in anticipation, as it will be the theme of transcendent joy in inheritance.

SUNDAY MORNING, Sept. 29, 1872. LESSON: HEB. xii., 1-13; 22-29. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 551, 725, "Shining Shore."

The development of the human character (a theme most fit at this period of the world's history, when so much is being learned about the past of men, when such humiliating disclosures are being made, and when there is so much that leads men gladly to look away from their origin), is a subject which may well deserve our consideration. The character of man originally is poor indeed. His average condition upon the globe is such as not particularly to attract our admiration. The feebleness of men in every part—in reason, in emotion, in moral sentiment—is apparent. The race as discriminators of that which is right; as knowing how to obey even the lowest cycle of laws, the material; and as knowing how to obey social and civil and spiritual laws—does not present a spectacle which it is pleasant to contemplate. As you rise step by step along these graded cycles of law, the comparison becomes more and more painful. Nor will the best specimens, under the best conditions, and with the longest development, bear too close a scrutiny. For human life is made up of infinite weaknesses. It is partially developed here and there. It yet lies in solitude in many places. As in some parts of a new country there are clearings on which remain the stumps of the original trees, and as these clearings are surrounded by the rank wilderness, so spots here and there in men's nature are partially developed, and the rest lies yet uncultivated.

Now, to look upon the race of men, and to predict that they are to come into a condition in which they shall be perfect in every faculty and harmonious in all their relations, seems like the dream of a poet run mad with hope; and yet such is the destiny that is pointed out in the New Testament ideal of men. Whatever may have been their origin, there is a process by which they are coming up to manhood. Whatever may have been disclosed concerning them, there is a creative method by which they are to become *men*. Whatever may be the discriminations between the different portions of the human race, as to which is highest and which is lowest; whatever may be thought in respect to men as denizens of this world, or as citizens of any part thereof, or as agents or factors of creation, there is no doubt in respect to their future as spiritual beings, as citizens of God's great household, the universe. Whether it be true or not, I do not propose now to argue, although it seems to me that an argument might be constructed on this point; but no man, supposing it to be true, will wish to resist its truth.

It seems to me that the most transcendent vision any one can look upon is that vision which is opened up in Christ Jesus of the condition and destiny of the human race in the ages which are yet

to come, when they shall have been clothed in the virtues of the Lord Jesus Christ, and perfected, and brought home to the far-off spheres where perfection shall be consummated, and where we shall know what it is to be the sons of God. "It doth not appear," as the apostle significantly said, "what this means." We are sons of God, but what it is to be sons of God we do not yet know. There is something hidden under that title which man may not know till he attains. For there are no types of experience, and there are no sides of human knowledge which shall throw light on the full meaning of what it is to be a partaker of the divine nature. There are glimpses of what it may be for one to be possessed of perfect intuitional reason. All men, I suppose, sometimes have hours in which they *see*, not *think*. There are those who in certain directions are luminous; and they seem to be universal seers.

The time is to come, I suppose, when all men will dwell in this higher sphere, though probably with conditions and gradations. This dull light which burns as an oil-lamp wick burns, is to glow brighter than the light of the stars or than the sunlight. We are to be partakers of the divine nature.

Among the things which are most developed among men are the social affections. These act with every variation in the household, and with a diminishing ratio as the distance increases from *ego*—from self. But the time is coming when that love which we now see in this world—the noblest love that exists between motherhood or fatherhood and childhood—is to be disclosed in all directions, so that men shall find their whole nature irradiated, ennobled; all their life, so to speak, being filled with golden streams which run through it as from a perennial fountain. The time is coming when these dull and obscure affections, which are so often cast aside, or so often used only in single instances, or so often employed as if they were medicines and not food, shall be developed. When every part of men's social nature shall be developed in symmetry and harmony, the soul that loves will be a very different creature from that which we yet have known here—as different as a single bell is from a chime of bells, or as a whistle is from an organ.

We are to be not only sons of God, and partakers of the divine nature, but we are to be *heirs* with Christ to the eternal inheritance which he has with God. And to be a co-heir is to be equal. We are to walk with equal foot-steps, side by side with him. The distance between us and Jesus he is to annihilate by the development and growth which he works in us. And though we are not to partake of the divine nature in the sense of infinity, we are to partake of it in the sense of quality, and with such significant power that we shall be companions with God walking step by step with him.

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you."

Christ saith to his disciples, "I have made you my confidential friends"; and that which to them was true, is to be true to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. This work cannot be consummated in this world. It can only be begun here. We see the seeds of it. We see its germs and pointings. The future opens to us as a realm of transmutation, of growth and development, transcendent above anything that we know on earth. The apostle; the most inspired of the apostles; the one most fit to be inspired; the noblest when inspired; in many respects the greatest nature that ever lived among men—Paul, with all his visions, with all his experience, with all that he had of the grace of God wrought out in him—stands looking into the other life, and says, "We know it only like a speck; we know it only in spots, here and there." So rich, so radiant, so glorious is the heavenly sphere, that when the apostle who had been in the seventh heaven, and seen things which it was not possible to utter, stood again among men, and looked into the sphere above, the height, the depth, the length and the breadth of the glory of God in Jesus Christ, and the power of his redeeming love, were such that he said, "We know in part. What we see here compared with what I saw there, is, as what my childhood was compared with what I am now since I have become a man."

"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

The earth changes. Much that in this world seems to us radiant and glorious is relative, and passes away. We read that the things which are transient are to be shaken down, and that the things which are permanent, which belong to everlastingness, are to remain unshaken. The apostle says that intellect, great as it is, will be transcended; that knowledge, much of it as can be accumulated here, and important as it really is, will be thrown into the shade, by and by; that when we come to know things as they are, what we think we know now will hardly be as much as a punctuation point in an encyclopedia. Prophecies shall cease, and learning shall cease. All those things shall cease which men think are of so much value. Only three things will remain—hope, love, faith. Essential, emotive soul-qualities, which are the marrow and substance of manhood in distinction from animalhood—these things will remain. And about these, as a center, will be gathered all those things which go to constitute the mind of man. These go on in the other life; and there they will far transcend what they

are here. So glorious shall we be there that what we are here shall seem as nothing. And as the apostle stood and looked into that future, he said, "I am a child." He, the chiefest of all the apostles, and the noblest of the many inspired men of his time, or of any time, declared that he had but just begun to learn what was in store for him.

If I go to one who is scant of flowers, and carry in from the prairies an armful of blossoming beauty, he looks upon it with rapture, and says, "Where did so many flowers come from?" If I go to a poor garret-born or cellar-bred creature who never has been where flowers are raised, to one who has seen only single flowers, or to one whose nearest idea of vegetation is that of tobacco, and carry a beautiful bouquet to him, he looks upon it, and says, "Oh! How wonderful!" But I say to him, "You do not know anything about flowers. Come and ride with me day in and day out, knee deep in them, over the grand prairie, and then tell me if you think this handful amounts to anything."

The man with an experience rich as the apostle's was; the man whose developments, whose traits of character, and whose life were pre-eminent for their likeness to the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, yet said, "It all goes for nothing. We are children. We do not understand what we shall be when that which is perfect is come. That which is relative is to pass away. So great and noble and transcendent and pure and beautiful will be the disclosures of the future, so resplendent will heaven be, when we get there, that all we knew of earthly hope, will, as we look back upon it, scarcely seem to be a germ of that which we shall then realize.

Look at this acorn. How small it is! I can pocket it, and a dozen like it. I can carry it on my little finger. I can snap it. A child might sling it. And when it has grown a year or two it is a mere whip. A boy might uproot it. But let it grow through a hundred years, under the influence both of summer storms and of winter blasts, as well as of the mellow light and warmth of the sun and the sweet and refreshing nourishment of the rains; let it be toughened and made rugged by the changing seasons through a century; it will become an immense outspreading tree: and yet this acre-covering oak which is the product of that acorn is hardly a simile of the products of the world to come compared with the seed-forms of this life. For heaven is wider, infinitely, than the growths of this horizon. They are not to be measured by the growths of this winter sphere.

Now, Christ is not revealed as a heavenly fetich such that if you only believe in him you will by some mysterious arrangement, some superstitious influence, be drawn up and saved at last.

Christ is not revealed, either, as a philosophical problem; but if half the strength which has been exerted to dissect the nature of Christ and fix his place in the divine government, had been expended in discovering the truth of Christ born in you, the hope of glory; if this vast intellectual dialecticism had been inspiration or prophecy drawing the soul toward Christ as a Lover and a sympathizing Friend, how the heavens would by this time have blazed with that name which is above every name! But we turn aside to analyze and reconstruct; and thus the moral and spiritual strength of men, and the church itself, has been thrown away.

Neither is Christ revealed in the New Testament as a mere ideal of beauty which men may look upon, from the standard of art and poetry. There is that in him which ministers to faith. There is that in him which gives to superstition, even, some degree of warmth. There is that in him which ought to bewilder a poet with joy, and which ought to make prophecy spread its wings as an eagle that is soaring toward the sun.

But it is not this, nor this chiefly, that is disclosed to us. Christ is disclosed to us as the Author and Finisher of our faith. He is so related to the work of developing and glorifying the human race that he is all in all; that he meets every one of those wants in the soul which are necessary for that final disclosure of glory which is to bring us up into the presence of God, and make us what I have been describing as the possibility and reality of the future. He is the Architect, the Engineer, the Leader, the Guide, the Schoolmaster; he is the Friend; he is the Father and Brother; he is the Rescuer and Saviour; he is the great Artisan and Artist of all the things which are required for the education of the race, for the disclosure of the human soul, till it comes to its maximum power and beauty and symmetry and joyfulness in the heavenly land.

Here, then, is the prayer of the apostle. It is a most glowing representation of the dignity and grandeur of the human soul in its future, and also of the glory and sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ as the instrument by which its destiny is to be wrought out.

I remark, in the first place, in view of this opening of the text, that we see herein the meagerness of the common ideas of religion. As it is usually regarded, it is a kind of insurance against hell, or a sort of guarantee or indorsement of heaven. I saw it stated, only last week, in a paper, "Mr. Beecher preaches manhood, whereas the Gospel preaches salvation." It is very true that I preach man in Christ Jesus. I am constantly endeavoring to augment a sense of manhood. I seek to inspire a higher ideal of the dignity and worth

of men. In one sense it is true that I do not preach salvation, but in another and grander sense I do preach salvation pre-eminently. I say that the road to salvation is *salvableness*. I say that an essential to salvation is that man shall be worth saving. And I preach that Jesus Christ by the divine power fashions men into that which he wants to save, and that we are made salvable by the work which is wrought in us. I, not preach salvation? What is the end and aim of my ministry but to inspire men with a most enthusiastic and ardent longing to be saved? How? As a sneaking thief would be saved who had dodged the sheriff and remained a thief still? As some drunken brute would be saved, wallowing in the stye, but eluding inspection and staggering into the house, and on his bed snoring the fumes of his drunkenness away? No, not unwashed; not ungrown; not unbeautiful. Salvation means to me transformation. It means the fire of the Holy Ghost burning out men's dross. It means inspiration, elevation of soul, God-likeness, Christ-likeness, heaven in you. Christ *in you*—that is salvation.

Salvation does not mean going where nothing can hurt you. It does not mean poor, beggarly hiding from storms. It is positive, energetic strength. It is manhood in magnitude. It is the power of God in the human soul. It is new life, new being. I, not preach that?

Oh! such a work as this—how different is it from routine experiences! A man is convicted that he is a sinner—and that is a good thing. He gets a hope—and that is a good thing. And afterward he says, "I have religion"—and that is a good thing, too. But he goes on for ten years, and is not a bit more generous. He is not a particle more soft or sweet. He is as obstinate as he always was. He is just as irritable and just as unspiritual as ever, understanding nothing that he cannot eat, or that he cannot see and handle; loving money as he always did. If you ask him the reason for the faith that is in him, he informs you that he was convicted once. He tells you what a time he had when he was convicted. And he says that ever since he has had a hope.

Far be it from me to say that these, as stepping stones toward real growth and development, are to be spoken lightly of or to be despised. Yet they are mere transient steps. If a person is brought into manhood sweeter, brighter, nobler and more divine, that is getting religion. It is becoming more and more like God.

There is a great want of litheness and joyfulness and liberty in the experience of average Christians. We are not doing what we were commanded to do. I notice that when men in New York would sell their flowers, they fill their windows

full of the most beautiful ones. As I came down Broadway the other evening, and passed the florists' shops, I saw vast bouquets, and vast piles of heliotropes, and rosebuds, and various other tempting flowers lying in the windows; and the sight of them made me wish to jump out, and run in, and get some of them. For they and I are cousins. They know me, and I know them; and I always like to stop and speak to them. I long for their companionship. But what if I had seen in those windows burdock, and bull-thistles, and all manner of ugly and hirsute and stinging nettles, should I have wanted to go near them?

What if some robustious Christians are always thundering out from their conscience censorious remarks about other people; what if other men are narrow and sharp and stringent in their faith; what if other men are oppressive and rigorous; what if other men are lean and gaunt like an empty sack; what if other men are like a plump barrel too much filled; what if there are all manner of characters that lack the Christian graces, does anybody, seeing their good works, want to glorify the Father which is in heaven? Do you suppose that when I see a frozen man I am warmed to glorify God? When I see men who profess to be religious, but whose life is devoid of the spirit of true religion, do not I say, with all my heart, "Deliver me from religion, if that is religion?" But if I see a man who knows how to do good; if I see a man who, doing good, does it from the love of doing it; if I see a man who, when reviled, reviles not again; if I see a man who is full of gentleness, and sweetness, and hope and faith, and who, when other men are alarmed, still goes about good, sweet, true, pure, loving, gentle, faithful to the end, I bow down at his feet, and say, "Where got you that spirit? Your God shall be my God." The gospel that we want to-day is the gospel of sweet manhood. We want a truly transparent gospel. We want a gospel that is translated. We want the gospel in its living forms.

Compare the average Christian life with those transcendent views of the glorification of human nature which are contained in the gospels—especially in those interpretations of the gospels, the epistles. How such a comparison rebukes the way in which we are living as Christian men! How far does it show us to be coming short of the duties which Christianity imposes upon us! But the work of Christianity we cannot see in full. It is a work which is largely in the future, though some of it is here.

Do you recollect going out into Prospect Park in Brooklyn when they were first laying it out? They were going to have a great park; and it *is* a great park. It is one of the most beautiful parks

in the world, and you ought to be more proud of it than you are. But how did they go to work to make it? What did they do first? They took off everything that was beautiful from the surface, and heaped it in large stacks. They took off the sod and threw up the sub-soil, and the ground was like a man that had been skinned all over. It was ugly and hideous. By and by, however, there were some little bits improved. They spread out some soil, and put in some shrubs, and some small points here and there were made quite attractive. And they followed up this process little by little. The great bulk of the park, so far as its surface was concerned, was to be created; and here came out a bit, and there a bit, from year to year; and people said, "It is beautiful as far as it goes."

Men grow just so when God takes hold of them, and they begin to be Christians. The old growths are cleaned away, and transformations take place under the divine influence. Oftentimes a man looks less beautiful after the work of grace has first begun in him than he did before; but gradually his nature changes. In some directions it improves. One part after another begins to be wrought out by the divine discipline, and by the concurrent desire of men for education. Little by little the lineaments of the divine character come up. But the whole of it cannot appear until you get into a climate that is without winter. This is such a world that the highest degrees of human excellence cannot be attained until we get out of it. The lower forms, the foundation elements of the great structure, which require a certain physical manipulation, are begun and carried forward here; but as plants that are grown in green-houses are not taken out of doors until winter is gone, and have their glory in summer, so in this green-house of a world, as it were, we are sprouted; and it is not until summer dawns on this sphere, and we are transplanted to a soil where frosts no longer come, that we show all the power and beauty of our character.

So grand a plan demands an Architect and an Artist who is competent to carry it out. When you preach the doctrine of our dependence upon God in a certain way, it discourages men; and yet I think there is a way in which dependence upon God may be preached so as to encourage them. If a man says, "You have no power, and God demands of you things that are impossible to you," and leaves it in that gaunt and dialectic state, my reason is offended. It looks like a charge of injustice against God. I revolt at it.

I proceed, we will suppose, to build me a house on my peaceful hill. *I* proceed to do it. *I*, with my pick-ax, dig the cellar, every

bit of it. *I* am able to do it, and wishing to be independent, *I* do it. *I* build the walls of the cellar, and carry the stones, all of them—*I* do it. *I* fix the mortar, and *I* put them in their places. *I* undertake to raise the whole frame. *I* prepare every timber, *I* saw every board, and *I* drive every nail. *I* undertake to build this house. And how long will it take me? There is but just one thing that I shall want when I get through, and that is another house about six feet long and two feet wide. I spend all my life building me a house, and I do it poorer than I could have it done for me. But I can build that house, provided I have an architect to give me a plan, and a contractor who will undertake to execute that plan, and who is competent to do it. And it will be I that build it. The work will be mine. It will be the result of my inspiration. It will be built by me, for my use. But I shall be able to do it because I have such enginery at my command, which works out my will.

I hear the voice of God saying, in the Bible, "Work out your own salvation, with fear and trembling." "Why," I say, "it is too much. I can not do it." "Work out your own salvation," still sounds out to me. But these passions, these irregular appetites, which come and go as ocean tides—how can I control them? How can I stop those storms which rage on the Atlantic? How can I bring down those mountains which are so high, or bring up those valleys which are so low? How can I sweeten those affections which have been created in me? How can I from day to day keep those purposes steadfast which are fugitive as the mercury in the glass? How can I symmetrize every part of myself? In despair I say, "I cannot build that spiritual house." Still the command is, "Work out your own salvation." But, blessed be God, there is something more. "For it is *God which worketh in you* both to will and to do of his good pleasure." There is my hope. I have an Architect. I have a Contractor. I have a mighty Workman. I have all that which is necessary to enable me to accomplish what I undertake. Now I can build my soul-house. Now I can do all that needs to be done, whether it be in time or in the eternal sphere; for it is God that is making out the portraiture and plan, and it is God that has undertaken to carry forward that plan, and it is God that works in me to do what I am doing. Christ is all in all. In all personal power, he has adaptations to give us what we need. If it be reason that we need, there is the supply in Christ's nature. If it be moral sense or sentiment that we need, Christ stands over against it as bread stands over against the mouth when the body is in need of food. Whatever we need

in social affections is provided for by the Spirit of the quickening God. When the will and purpose of men are right, and they attempt to work, everything is prepared for them.

This work is only begun in this world. The best man comes to his death without all this ripeness and glory that is described in the Bible. Men are discouraged, frequently, because they are not as good as persons that they read about in the Bible and in biographies; and one thing is very certain, that when a man is well dead and out of the way, he is a great deal better than he was before. Children that were torments to the whole neighborhood when they were alive—how glorious they are as they appear in Sunday-school books! And after men are once gone, what nobility dawns from them!

Partly this is illusive, and partly it is true. We do not see each other as we are. We do not use our best feelings as instruments by which to see the best things that are in our fellow-men. We use our worst feelings, and interpret the worst sides of those who are around about us. We are guilty of unequable judgments of persons with whom we have to do. And when they are gone, we make a new estimate; we take a new account of stock, and come to the conclusion that they were better men, all things considered, than we supposed they were. This "adulation of death," as it is sometimes called, proceeds from an amiable cause. Nevertheless, men, when they are once gone, are apt to be thought better men than while they yet lingered upon the earth. The best men are imperfect; but as an amusement, I have not the slightest objection to the contemplation of the doctrine of perfection on earth. It is a very pleasing recreation, and I do not know why it may not be indulged in sometimes as well as other recreations. It occupies time that might be worse spent. But the idea of perfection in this world belongs to another system of theology from that in which I believe—an old technical system; a commercial system; a system in which is marked out a line of attainments for men, the reaching of which entitles them to be called perfect. But if you take the spiritual notion of manhood, it is germinent, growing. It is not perfect until Christ is completely ripened in the soul—a thing which does not happen in this life. There is no such thing as perfection on earth. There may be approaches in that direction; there may be attainments which point thitherward; but as to perfection, the word does not belong to the Christian scheme in this sphere. We are but begun on earth. In the other world much will be dropped. Much will go with us which belongs to our present state of existence; but much will be left behind.

I do not suppose an old ship-master could see a vessel that has gone over the ocean with him time and again, and that he has had many a good time in, stranded and lying high and dry on the coast, open at every seam, and dropping to pieces, without feelings of sorrow; yet I am not unwilling to drop this old body of mine. It has been a good body to me. It has served me night and day. I have made many pleasant voyages in it. But, after all, it has been a body of death to my soul; and it has hindered me. There has been a sharp contest between the good and the bad. And when I rise to the sphere where there are no such material laws as there are in this world, acting on such material bodies as ours; when to eat and drink and sleep are things of the past, and nothing but a vital soul is left, and I have only a spiritual body, then I shall rejoice. Faithful as this body has been, I shall gladly bid it good-bye. I shall say, without regret, "Farewell, body of death: all hail, body of life!"

We are coming to that land in which we shall lay aside much that belongs to our present state. If you ask me, "What of this enginery is to be left behind?" I reply that I do not know. It is a matter of speculation purely. But whatever is relative will be shaken down before it passes beyond this world, and that which is permanent will remain in the other life. Much will perish, but much will last.

This world is to us as a nest. What is a nest to birds? It is the place where they are born, where they are bred, and where they are fledged. But when once a bird has been born, and has grown strong, and is winged, is the nest a place for him any longer? By as much as it was good for his helplessness, it is worthless for his strength. Now that the bird is developed, and can soar into the hemisphere above, it has no further need of a nest.

This world is good for a nest, but it is bad for a flying-place. It is a good place to be hatched in, but it is a bad place to practice one's wings in. If a man has power to fly, he does not want to be confined to a nest. The glory and power of the eagle is never known while he lives on his cliff—not till he has abandoned that, and sought his new home.

This, to me, casts a cheering light on the matter of dying and death. Death to me is a gate of pearl. It is Milton's "golden gate on golden hinges turning." Dying is more than going home to God. It is more than going home to friends and friendship. It is also going home to find out what we ourselves are. It is going home to find our soul-self. It is going home to our true nature. It is enfranchisement.

There are in many a dungeon, to-day, men who have been there, unsunned, for years and years, down deeper than the roots could go. There, in their unventilated prison, vermin-covered, chilled, and almost bereft of reason itself, they drag out a miserable existence. But suppose their prison-doors should be thrown wide open, and they should be called, by some liberating army, as the Italians were, to leave their dungeons, would they think it a misfortune? Would they count liberty to be a burden, and the chance to be free again a thing to be wept about? And we, that are of the earth, earthy; we that are of the flesh, fleshly; we that are infants undeveloped; we that have a thousand germinent points, beginnings, almost none of which are grown; we that are waiting, not for the redemption of the body, but for redemption from the body—for the enfranchisement of the spirit—shall we speak of death gloomily? Shall we count those unfortunate who have gone through the gate of death? All hail! sweet children, who know not the storm nor the winter, but who from out of the warmth of the mother's arms have stepped, at one sweet moment, into the warmth of the Saviour's love. All hail! those who are called in the midst of the battle of life to go to a higher sphere, and to the exaltation of nobler functions. Ye who are from day to day growing weaker, and who seem to go on your way with striving, are still declining in the path, look up and thank God. The night is almost spent to you. Do you see the dawn in the east? and do you know the meaning of that sky? It is heaven. It is immortality.

These views encourage men, instead of discouraging them. I should be discouraged if I felt that all these advantages in life depended on me, or that they were the result of my fidelity in such a sense that every mistake I made would be a mistake whose full weight would rest upon me. But when I think that what I am I am by the grace of God, and that his grace will be ministered to me in the time to come, and that I shall be, not what I am able to attain by my own powers, but what I am able to attain by my strength and wisdom guided by sovereign strength and wisdom, I am encouraged.

More than that, brethren, in these views it seems to me we have that equipoise which we need in the disappointments and afflictions and besetments of life. If a man is going to his treasure, to his life, to his honor and glory, why need he complain of the fare on the way, even though it may be poor?

A man receives a message from Europe, informing him that an uncle of his has died leaving him a hundred and twenty thousand

pounds sterling; and he throws off his apron, and says to the old hammer, slinging it in the corner, "Lie there;" and he says to the bellows, "I don't blow you any more;" and he bids farewell to the shop where he has toiled for so many long years, and puts on his best clothes, and starts for New York to take passage for his fatherland. But the weather is dry, and the car is dusty; and suppose the conductor should find him crying because it was so dusty, and because he had nothing to eat, and because, on the whole, the cars jolted so, and because, the train being delayed, he had lost an hour or so? Think of a man whining in that manner on his way to a fortune! It would be impossible. You could not do anything to that man to make him complain. He says to himself, all the time, "I am going to England to get a fortune—half a million." If you listen to his heart, you will find that he is saying, "I am worth half a million, half a million, half a million." Every clock that he sees ticks, "Ducats, ducats, ducats; dollars, dollars, dollars." And what does he care for anything else? If a man insults him he hardly notices it, and says, "That man does not know who I am. He does not know anything about me." Elated and joyous he goes through night and day, and takes everything that comes without a murmur, saying, "Soon I shall be in possession of my fortune; and what do I care for these little things?"

There is no treasure on earth like that which is laid up for us in heaven. There is no honor like that which surrounds that treasure in heaven. No friends on earth stand around the recipient of a great fortune like those friends, pure-handed and pure-hearted, who wait for our coming in heaven. They often come and look through to see how we fare. They stand on the battlements, in sympathy with all God's good universe, and see our warfare and doubts and discouragements, and call out to cheer us by the assurance of the reality of the heavenly life of manhood and joy, and say, "Come! come!" My father calls me to come. Through scores of years I have never ceased to hear the sweet soft voice of my mother saying to me, "Come!" My little children, with hands outstretched, call me, saying, "Come! Come!" and their voices fall as gently on my inward ear as the dew falls upon the flowers. Those that have labored with me, and have gone, say "Come!" The Father, the Spirit, and Jesus, say "Come!" And "let him that heareth say Come! and whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We believe, O Lord, that there remaineth a rest for the people of God. We rejoice that there is a land without storms; where the sun shall not smite by day; where there shall be no waste and no destroying; where all things shall conspire to purity and goodness, and to joy therein. There thou dwellest. There thou art gathering those that are ripening in the far-off worlds. There thou art making the realm rich. Thither go from our midst multitudes. They have heard thy voice calling them, and they have felt the sacred impulse, and they leave behind all mortality, all that has been a load and a clog, a yoke and a burden, and rise through the inspiration of thy Spirit and thy drawing, into thy presence, to be as thou art, and to be with all that are garnered from ages gone by; with all that are noble in the princely estate of heaven. We thank thee that so many, beloved of us, are there. We thank thee that there is no bound to that realm. Nor need we fear that the multitude of those who flock thither shall dispossess those that come after them. We rejoice that so many footsteps that walked by our side now beat the heavenly plains; that so many who learned of us the lessons of life are gone before us to their reward, and to unite with those who from the walls of heaven cry out to us unceasingly, day and night, Come—come. We are coming, by years of sorrow, by joys, by our mistakes and downfalls, as much as by our victories. Plied on every side by thine influence, upheld by thee, guided by thee, still we pursue our way, and are tending evermore toward the land above. And we hope, by thy provident grace which hath thus far sustained us and made us what we are, to persevere, and to obtain the greetings of the celestial abode. Even so, Lord Jesus, breathe upon us the comfort of this hope and faith, that the brightness of the heavenly land may pierce the darkness which often surrounds us; that the certainty of our going there as the sons of God may take away from us the sense of sinfulness and weakness which oppresses us here upon earth.

Look, we beseech of thee, with compassion upon us all. If there be any whose sins hound them day and night, and pursue them relentlessly, O thou that art the Rescuer, deliver them from fear and anguish, and give them peace in thee. If there be those who are beclouded with doubts, and hindered on their voyage in the uncertain way, come to them walking upon the sea, and bid their storms to cease, and go with them in their ship to the very end.

We pray for all those who have tasted the bitter cup of trouble. Didst thou not put it to thy lips, though it was much to take, and though it surpassed human power? Didst thou not drink to the end, that the divine will might be accomplished? And if thou art putting to the lips of any of thy dear people a cup whose mixture is bitter, show them the hand which bears the cup, that they may see the mark of the nail. And show them thy pierced side, that they may see the mark of the spear. Thou that hast died for us, and art now living for us—thou dost not willingly afflict; and thou wilt cause all the troubles and sorrows which come upon us to bear abundant fruit, by and by, when we shall have been disciplined and exercised, to the glory of God. Sustain those who are weak and ready to perish, and those who are driven about by winds of fear, and those who are harassed by memories that will not sleep.

We pray that thou wilt be near to those who love thee. Fulfill toward them thine office and work. Keep them in thy thought evermore. Thou that art the Head over all, of which the church is thy body, what dost thou do but comfort those who are comfortless, and enlighten those who are in

darkness, and strengthen those who are perishing for lack of strength? Put thine arms about every one who needs thy support. Speak to every one his own name, that he may know that God means him. Hear the hearts that cannot utter their trouble, and do not even know what it is, but are distressed, and in pain, and are as they that dream, and strive to wake, and cannot.

O thou Deliverer, do thy work, not according to our skill or knowledge in asking, but according to thine own seeing, and according to thy tender mercies, and according to all the necessities which lie before thee as an open book.

We thank thee for all the mercies which thou hast vouchsafed to us as a church. We thank thee for our union and fellowship together in years gone by. We thank thee for the hope of the future. And we pray, O Lord our God, that thou wilt humble us under the mighty mercies of thine hand. May we not become proud or vain, nor in any wise lifted up. Wilt thou so open to us a sense of what we are, of how far we are from thee, and of the grandeur of thine influence in eternal life, that we may be kept from swelling pride and from faults of vanity. We pray that thou wilt grant a spirit of new life and new love-labor to this people. May they be more painstaking and diligent and enterprising in the work of Christ Jesus. And may they labor for men in season and out of season. We pray that those who have begun in the Christian course may be prospered in their journey heavenward, and that those who are wanderers abroad may be brought back again, and that those who are adversaries may become friendly.

Bless, we beseech of thee, all those who are in households—parents who are troubled for their children, or who are carrying their burdens heavily. Bless those who teach from day to day, oppressed with the responsibility of those who are committed to their charge. Bless those who are called to transact business, whether it be public or private. May they be upheld by thee wherever they go. May they be guided by thy power to victory in whatever they undertake that is right.

We pray that thy blessing may rest upon those who are afar off from us, in distant lands, or upon the sea, or in the wilderness. Wherever in thy providence they are, remember them, and grant exceeding abundantly more to them than we can ask or think.

We pray that thou wilt accept our thanks for life preserved, for union consummated, and for restored relations in this place between pastor and people. And we pray that all of us may be sanctified by thy goodness, led to repentance by thy mercies, softened and sweetened by thy divine influences, and prepared for that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

Bless, we pray thee, all thy churches, and all thy ministers and servants. May thy word be spread everywhere. May the power of the Gospel elevate all men. We pray that intelligence and knowledge, accompanied by virtue, may spread, and that this land, and all lands, may be brought to a knowledge of Jesus the Saviour of the world.

And to thy name, Father, Son, and Spirit, shall be praise everlasting. *Amen.*

PLYMOUTH PULPIT.

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